

City of Westminster

Current Side Code

Chapter 17.330

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Chapter 17.330 Signs

17.330.005 Purpose

This Chapter provides a comprehensive system for the regulation of signs in the City. Sign regulation is enacted to serve the interests of community aesthetics and vehicular and pedestrian safety; to protect and preserve property values; and to improve the visual environment of the City so as to promote commerce, investment, tourism, and visitation, and the overall quality of life for persons living in, doing business in, or visiting the City. The provisions of this Chapter are also intended to promote the public health, safety, and general welfare of persons driving, parking, biking, walking, or residing or conducting business within the City, by reducing visual distractions to motorists and by making signs and advertising displays more attractive, aesthetically pleasing, and effective.

Signs are especially an important part of any commercial district. They help customers find the stores for which they are looking. Signs are primarily identifiers; it should not be their purpose to advertise. When too many signs are located along a street, they create unattractive clutter, they compete with one another, and their effectiveness as identifiers is therefore greatly reduced. It is the intent of the sign regulations provided herein to provide each business in the City with the opportunity to erect a fair and adequate amount of signage that will achieve the stated purposes.

The regulations of this Chapter are not intended to permit any violations of the provisions of any other lawful ordinance, or to prohibit the use of any sign required by any law superior to that of this Title.

A. Regulatory Interpretations. Where a particular type of sign is proposed in a permit application, and the type is neither expressly allowed nor prohibited nor restricted by this Chapter, or whenever a sign does not qualify as a “structure” as defined in the [Uniform Building Code](#), then the Director shall approve, conditionally approve, or disapprove the application based on the most similar sign type that is expressly regulated by this Chapter. Architectural compatibility shall be analyzed on the basis of size,

location, color, construction materials, and design of the sign structure, without consideration of the message to be displayed on a sign, other than the distinction between on-site and off-site commercial messages.

B. Discretionary Approvals. Whenever a sign or proposed sign is subject to any discretionary approval process, including but not limited to, a variance, Conditional Use Permit, or Administrative Use Permit, then no consideration will be given to sign copy or message to be displayed, other than a determination as to whether the message will constitute off-site commercial copy. This principle applies equally at all levels of approval, from the Director to the Council.

C. Noncommunicative Aspects of Signs. All rules and regulations concerning the noncommunicative aspects of signs, such as location, size, height, illumination, spacing, orientation, and so forth, stand enforceable independently of any permit or approval process. (Ord. 2456 § 2, 2010)

17.330.010 Applicability

A. Signs Regulated. The sign standards provided in this Chapter shall apply to all signs in all zoning districts. A sign may be erected, placed, established, painted, created, or maintained in the City only in conformance with the standards, procedures, exemptions and other requirements of this Chapter. All signs shall also comply with the City of Westminster Design Guidelines Manual.

B. Applicability to Sign Content. The provisions of this Chapter do not regulate the message content of signs (sign copy), regardless of whether the message content is commercial or noncommercial.

C. Definitions. Definitions of specific types of signs and other terms used in this Chapter are contained in Article 7, *Definitions*. (Ord. 2456 § 2, 2010)

17.330.015 English-Language Identification

For public safety considerations, where the message provided on a wall sign is in a language other than English, the business shall provide upon said sign English language identification in the form of the business name and/or the street address. (Ord. 2456 § 2, 2010)

17.330.020 Area and Height Computation

The following principles shall control computation of sign area and height:

A. Computation of Area of Individual Signs. The area of a sign face (which is also the sign area of a wall sign or other sign with only one face) shall be computed based upon a single geometric shape (square, rectangle, oval, etc.) that forms the perimeter (outer edge) of all the text and/or graphics of a sign and not around individual lines or groupings of sign text and/or graphics. In this manner, can-type signs and signs affixed to a wall without a clear border are treated similarly.

B. Computation of Area of Multifaced Signs. The sign area for a sign with more than one face shall be computed by calculating the area of a single geometric shape that will include all sign faces visible from any one point and that will produce the largest square footage. When two identical sign faces are placed back to back, so that both faces cannot be viewed from any point at the same time, and when such sign faces are part of the same sign structure and are not more than 48 inches apart, the sign area shall be computed by the measurement of one of the faces.

C. Computation of Height. The height of a sign shall be computed as the distance from the base of the sign at normal grade to the top of the highest attached component of the sign. Normal grade shall be construed to be the lower of the existing grade prior to construction or the newly established grade after construction, exclusive of any filling, berming, mounding, or excavating solely for the purpose of locating the sign. In cases where the normal grade cannot reasonably be determined, sign height shall be computed on the assumption that the elevation of the normal grade at the base of the sign is equal to the elevation of the nearest point of the crown of a public street. See Figure 3-7 for illustration of sign-height measurement.

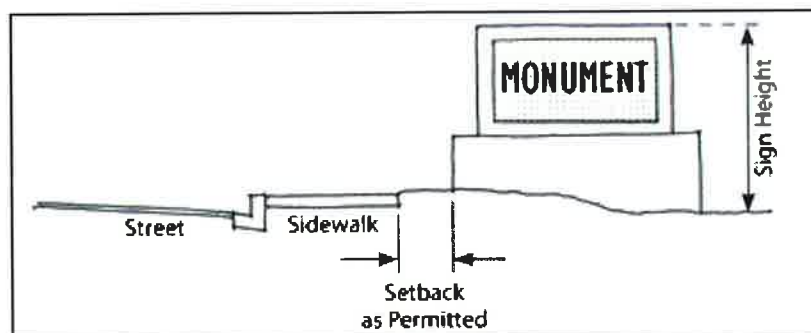


Figure 3-7
Sign-Height Measurement

D. Computation of Maximum Total Permitted Sign Area per Lot. The permitted sum of the area of all individual signs on a lot shall be computed by applying the formula contained in Table 3-9 to the lot frontage, building frontage, or wall area, as appropriate, for the zoning district in which the lot is located.

E. Administrative Adjustment to the Area and Height Computation. The Director may permit an increase to the maximum allowed sign area or height restrictions, not to exceed 10 percent of the maximum allowed area or height, when the following findings can be made:

1. The proposed adjustment is consistent with the goals, policies, and programs of the Westminster General Plan;
2. The proposed adjustment will not create a safety hazard and will fully comply with the building code as adopted by the City;
3. The proposed adjustment will not result in an adverse impact on the surrounding properties and the community.

(Ord. 2456 § 2, 2010)

17.330.025 Temporary Signs

A. Permitted Types. Permitted temporary signs on private property include:

- Banners
- Pennants
- Flags
- “Future Development” signs
- Tract directional signs
- Commercial “for rent” or “for lease” signs
- Political signs

Please refer to Article 7 for definitions of temporary signs.

B. General Requirements. Temporary signs on private property shall be allowed only upon issuance of a temporary sign permit, which shall be subject to the following requirements:

1. **Term and general standards.** A temporary sign permit shall allow the use of a temporary sign in accordance with the following terms and standards:

a. *Banners, pennants, and flags.* Not to exceed 90 days during any calendar year. A temporary sign permit shall expire on December 31 of the year in which it is issued. There shall be no carry-over of unused term allotment into the succeeding year. Only one 90-day temporary sign-use period within any calendar year shall be allowed for each business premises and the 90-day period may be divided into no more than 3 display periods within any calendar year. However, if a new business license holder occupies premises that have been vacant for a period of at least 15 days during a calendar year, the new license holder shall be entitled to the use of a temporary sign for up to 90 days. A single temporary banner, pennant, or flag permit may be issued and a single fee paid for multiple display periods not to exceed a total of 90 days during the calendar year, if the dates of the display periods and the message to be displayed during each period are known and are shown on the permit. If the dates of the additional display periods and the message to be displayed are not shown on the permit, then additional permits and fees will be required for any subsequent display periods. Refer to Table 3-11 and Section 17.330.085.B.7 for banner provisions.

b. *Future development.* Not to exceed 180 days during the first permit period, and not to exceed 90 days for any subsequent periods, provided that a finding can be made that there is diligent progress on the development. No temporary sign permit for future development shall be issued until all preliminary development approvals have been received, except that grading or construction permits need not be issued. Future development signs shall be removed upon

issuance of a certificate of occupancy for the development, notwithstanding any time remaining on the permit. Renewal fees for a future development sign shall be one-half the original issuance fee. A future development sign shall not exceed an area of 40 square feet per sign face and an overall height of 10 feet. Such sign may be constructed of wood or metal or both. Not more than one such sign per 500 feet of street frontage shall be permitted, set back at least 10 feet from the ultimate street right-of-way line. Such sign shall be nonilluminated. A V-shaped sign may be considered one sign, provided that the distance between the legs of the V as viewed from above the sign looking down does not exceed 4 feet and the property has a minimum frontage of 500 feet. Otherwise, a V-shaped sign shall be considered two signs.

c. *Tract directional.* Not to exceed 180 days during the first permit period, and not to exceed 90 days for any subsequent renewal periods, except that if the cumulative display periods exceed one year, any further sign permit extensions shall be granted by the Commission, subject to conditions of approval. Such sign shall be located on a lot other than the property where the residential subdivision is located, provided that the owner of such lot has given written permission for such display. A tract directional sign advertising a tract not located in the City is prohibited. A tract directional sign shall not be a future development sign. Renewal fees for a tract directional sign shall be one-half the original issuance fee. The development standards for a tract directional sign shall be the same as for a future development sign. A tract directional sign shall be located on an arterial street.

d. *Commercial "for rent" or "for lease" sign.* Not to exceed one year during the first permit period, and not to exceed 180 days for any subsequent renewal period, for a cumulative total of two years or upon the rental or lease of 90 percent of the space available in the development, whichever occurs first. Any extensions beyond two years shall be approved by the Commission. The development standards for a commercial "for rent" or "for lease" sign shall be the same as for a future development sign.

e. *Political signs.* All political signs shall be removed within 30 days after the election without leaving debris. Political signs shall only be located on private property with the permission of the property owner. All such signs shall maintain a setback of at least five feet from any public right-of-way. Political signs shall comply with all requirements of this Chapter applicable to temporary signs except that they shall not be required to obtain a permit from the City. A political sign with dimensions greater than three feet by three feet constructed of paper, vinyl, cloth, or plastic may be mounted to a light-weight framework of wood or metal to provide rigidity or support. A free-standing political sign with dimensions of three feet by three feet or larger, and mounted upon, attached to, or painted on a solid wood, plastic, metal or plaster sheet or backing may be erected in the City, provided that the sign has the proper depth of footings and is properly braced per the Uniform Building Code according to the design characteristics of such sign. A political sign shall not exceed 40 square feet in area.

2. **Other conditions.** Temporary signs shall be subject to the requirements outlined in Tables 3-8 and 3-11, except that political signs shall not be subject to the requirements outlined in Table 3-11.

(Ord. 2456 § 2, 2010)

17.330.030 Exempt Signs

The following signs shall be exempt from regulation under this Chapter:

- A. Any public notice or warning required by a valid and applicable federal, state, or local law, regulation, or ordinance.
- B. Any sign located at least 3 feet inside a building, not attached to an exterior window or door, or within an enclosed mall.

- C. Works of art that do not include a commercial message.
- D. Holiday lights and decorations with no commercial message, but only during reasonable periods before and after recognized local, state, or national holidays. (Ord. 2456 § 2, 2010)

17.330.035 Signs in the Public Right-of-Way

No signs shall be permitted in the public right-of-way, except as specified below. Any sign installed or placed on public property, except in conformance with the requirements of this Section, shall be forfeited to the public and subject to confiscation. In addition to other remedies herein, the City shall have the right to recover from the owner or person placing such a sign the full costs of removal and disposal of such sign. Signs allowed in the public right-of-way are:

- A. Public signs erected by or on behalf of a governmental body to post legal notices, identify public property, convey public information, and direct or regulate vehicular or pedestrian traffic;
- B. Informational signs of a public utility regarding its poles, lines, pipes, or facilities;
- C. Bus-stop signs or bus-stop structures erected or placed by a public-transit company or private company franchised by a governmental body;
- D. Signs placed by educational, philanthropic, religious, and public-service organizations; and by hospitals, libraries, and museums, all subject to the requirements and approval of the City Engineer;
- E. Projecting signs, subject to the requirements of Tables 3-8, 3-9 and 3-11, as applicable thereto;
- F. Warning signs erected by a governmental agency, a public utility company, or a contractor doing authorized work or permitted work within the public right-of-way. (Ord. 2456 § 2, 2010)

17.330.040 Prohibited Signs

All signs that are not expressly permitted under this Chapter, or are not exempt from regulation herein in accordance with Section 17.330.030, or are subject to the special provisions of Section 17.330.050, or that do not possess a special advertising privilege permit in accordance with Section 17.330.055, are prohibited in the City. Such signs include, but are not limited to:

- A. Beacons;
- B. Strings of lights;
- C. Inflatable signs and balloons;
- D. Moving or flashing signs;
- E. Roof signs (but not integral roof signs);
- F. Painted signs other than on carved wood or for temporary window display;
- G. Abandoned signs advertising goods or services no longer available on the lot where the sign is located because such business has ceased for a period of 90 days or more;
- H. Off-premises tract directional signs advertising land development projects outside the City;
- I. Off-premises tract directional signs advertising land development projects within the City, except as permitted by Section 17.330.025;
- J. Portable signs;
- K. Faded, deteriorated, or damaged signs;
- L. Any new or renovated sign not approved by the City;
- M. Changeable message technology, except as provided in subsection 17.330.050.C and any other

applicable provisions of this Chapter. (Ord. 2456 § 2, 2010)

17.330.045 Master Sign Plans

A. Requirement. A master sign plan shall be required for any of the following:

1. Multitenant developments of three or more separate businesses that either occupy the same building or lot, or share common access and parking facilities;
2. Whenever five or more signs are proposed for a development, whether for single or multiple tenants;
3. Whenever wall signs are proposed on multitenant buildings over one story in height, and having a shared building entry.

B. General Procedures. The following procedures shall govern the submission and approval of master sign plans:

1. **Application.** All applications for master sign plans shall be submitted as specified in Chapter [17.520](#).
2. **Fees.** Each application for a master sign plan shall be accompanied by applicable fees, which shall be established from time to time by Council resolution.

(Ord. 2456 § 2, 2010)

17.330.050 Special Provisions

Special provisions shall apply to the following uses, and said uses shall be exempt from any other regulation of this Chapter that conflicts with this Section to the extent of such conflict and no further.

A. Automobile Dealerships, New and Used. In addition to any permitted permanent signs, automobile dealerships shall be permitted to display nonmetallic helium balloons 18 inches in diameter or less on the weekends (Friday 9:00 a.m. through Sunday 12:00 a.m.), and on legal holidays (9:00 a.m. on the day preceding the holiday through 12:00 a.m. on the day of the holiday, unless the holiday contains a weekend, in which case the display shall cease at 12:00 a.m. on Sunday or the last day of the holiday period, whichever occurs last), provided that they do not project over the public right-of-way, do not exceed an overall altitude above the ground of 30 feet or create a public nuisance. The use of large (over 18 inches in diameter) non-helium inflatable advertising devices (including cold-air balloons) shall be subject to Commission review at a non-public hearing. All such large non-helium inflatables shall be affixed to the ground or the roof of a building, and shall be limited to 12 weekends or holidays per calendar year. Automobile dealerships shall be permitted to display pennants, flags, and temporary signs of a uniform design affixed to light standards within the property limits, and car-top signs throughout the year. Banners shall be limited to 90 days of display per calendar year, upon approval of a temporary sign permit. All components of an advertising display shall be maintained in good condition and shall not be permitted to become unsightly or a public nuisance.

B. Apartment Complexes, 16 Units or More. In addition to any permitted permanent signs, apartment complexes containing at least 16 units may be permitted to display flags and banners advertising apartments for rent or lease subject to Commission review at a non-public hearing. Approval may be granted by the Commission for up to one year, renewable annually, with the exception of banners, which shall be limited to 110 days per year. Pennants are prohibited. Displays shall comply with the following requirements:

1. There shall be no more than 1 flag pole for every 30 lineal feet of frontage on a public street. The pole shall be located behind the property line. Additional poles, as approved by the Commission, may be

placed along either side of the main walkway(s) leading to the main entrance(s) of the apartment complex.

2. Flag poles shall not exceed a height of 20 feet, and shall be placed in a vertical orientation. No flag pole shall encroach into the public right-of-way in any manner.
3. Flags shall only be attached to flag poles and shall not exceed a maximum of 24 square feet in size. Flags shall have a consistent color scheme and design. Only 1 flag per pole shall be permitted.
4. Banners shall be affixed to the building face or attached between 2 flag poles. Banners shall be limited to 2 per property. Banners shall not exceed a maximum size of 24 square feet, with no dimension measuring greater than 8 feet. Banner colors shall have a consistent color scheme and design and be complimentary to buildings. Banners may be displayed from 3:00 p.m. Friday through 6:00 p.m. Sunday.
5. All flags and banners shall be maintained in good condition and shall be immediately replaced if they become dirty, faded, torn or detached from their anchor points.

C. Billboards. Any billboard allowed by this Chapter, and all structural or electronic modifications to existing billboards, may be permitted only upon issuance of a Conditional Use Permit, shall meet all requirements of the California Department of Transportation, and shall be subject to the following limitations:

1. No more than 2 faces shall be allowed on any 1 billboard, with a maximum face size of 14 feet high and 48 feet wide and no greater than 35 feet in overall height.
2. At least 1 of the 2 advertising faces must be oriented toward and visible only from the freeway.
3. Changeable message technology may be allowed pursuant to a Conditional Use Permit, but only for a billboard face oriented toward and visible from a freeway.
4. The owner of the billboard shall be required to provide public service advertising at its sole cost and expense and/or advertisement space for businesses in the City, at no or reduced cost, for a minimum of 30 days a year for each billboard facing toward and visible from a freeway.

D. Signs on Existing Buildings Undergoing a Renovation. Whenever a building renovation program is being proposed, consideration should also be given to the development of a new sign program.

1. When 50 percent or more of existing signs in a development are going to be replaced, the remainder of the signs shall also be replaced at the same time in accordance with an approved sign program.
2. Within multiple tenant centers, as signs are replaced they shall be brought into conformance with the standards established in this Title and the City's adopted Design Guidelines Manual. When 50 percent of the tenant signs have been replaced, the remainder of the signs shall also be brought into conformance with the standards established in this Title and the City's adopted Design Guidelines Manual.

(Ord. 2490 § 2, 2012; Ord. 2456 § 2, 2010)

17.330.055 Special Advertising Permit

A. General Provisions. A special-advertising permit may be granted to a business or use by the Commission pursuant to the provisions of Chapters 17.550, *Conditional Use Permits*, and 17.555, *Administrative Adjustments and Variances*, if two or more of the following circumstances are found to exist:

1. There are unique physical conditions pertaining to the business location that were not created by the applicant and are beyond the applicant's control, and which deprive the business or use of any reasonable ability to advertise its presence to the public.
2. There are no other physically feasible means of providing adequate signage for the site. Cost shall not be the determinant of feasibility.

3. The business is not located in a multitenant commercial or industrial development under one management.
4. The grant of the special advertising device will not be objectionable or potentially injurious to other property owners or tenants in the vicinity; will not be aesthetically incompatible with the surrounding area; will not constitute a traffic hazard by virtue of being unduly distracting due to motion or the appearance of motion, color, or design; will not encroach into the public right-of-way; and will not constitute a grant of a special privilege or right not afforded other property owners in the vicinity who are in the same zone district and are experiencing the same lack of adequate advertising opportunities.
5. The advertising display will be temporary but the proposed time period will be longer than the maximum allowed under a special event permit.
6. There are unique features or characteristics of the business or use that create special advertising needs that are not adequately addressed in this Chapter, such as automobile dealerships.

B. Sign Types. The following types of signs may be permitted either singly or in combination, as deemed appropriate and necessary by the Commission:

1. Inflatable devices of any type, nature, or description;
2. Off-premises business signs, provided that the advertising display advertise only the business or use requesting the special advertising device;
3. Portable signs;
4. Flags, pennants, or banners.

C. Sign Specifications. The Commission shall have the discretion to establish the following specifications for any sign approved as a special advertising device, except that no specification shall be greater than the minimum needed to address the special circumstances that the Commission finds to exist on the basis of substantial evidence:

1. Sign area;
2. Sign height;
3. Number of signs;
4. Location;
5. Design—including, but not limited to, colors, materials, style, nature, size and content of the message, and lighting;
6. Type of sign(s);
7. Duration of display.

D. Commission Discretion. The Commission may call up any approval granted hereunder for review at any time and may modify or revoke the approval for sufficient cause after a duly noticed public hearing.

E. Other Conditions. The provisions of this Section shall apply solely to the circumstances listed under subsection A, and shall not substitute for the requirements of Chapter 17.555, *Administrative Adjustments and Variances*. (Amended during Supplement No. 20, 1/12; Ord. 2456 § 2, 2010)

17.330.060 Nonconforming Signs

Except as otherwise provided herein, the owner of any lot or other premises on which exists a sign that does not conform with the requirements of this Chapter or for which there is no current and valid sign permit shall be obligated to remove such sign or, in the case of a nonconforming sign, to bring it into conformity with the requirements of this Chapter.

A. Nonconforming Existing Signs and Terms. A sign that would be permitted under this Chapter, but

which was in existence on the effective date of the ordinance adopting this Chapter, or on a later date when the property is annexed to the City, and that was constructed in accordance with the ordinances and other applicable laws in effect on the date of its construction, but that by reason of its size, height, location, design, or construction is not in conformance with the requirements of this Chapter, shall be issued a nonconforming-sign permit if an application is filed no later than 24 months from the effective date of the ordinance adopting this Chapter. For any sign on property annexed at a later date, applications for nonconforming-sign permits shall be submitted within 6 months of the effective date of the annexation or within such period as may be established in an annexation agreement between the City and the landowner. Signs that are the subject of applications received after the 24-month period stipulated above shall be subject to all of the terms and conditions of this Chapter and shall not be entitled to the protection of this Section.

A nonconforming-sign permit shall allow the sign(s) subject to such permit, which were made nonconforming by the adoption of this Chapter, to remain in place and be maintained for a period ending no later than 5 years from the date of issuance of the nonconforming sign permit, provided that no action is taken that increases the degree or extent of the nonconformity. Such signs are also subject to the provisions of subsection B of this Section. A nonconforming sign shall not be:

1. Changed to another nonconforming sign;
2. Structurally or electrically expanded or altered unless such alteration is to bring the sign into full conformance with all current provisions of this Chapter;
3. Relocated to another site on the same property;
4. Reestablished after discontinuance for 90 days or more;
5. Reestablished after damage or destruction of more than 50 percent of the value of the sign prior to said damage or destruction.

B. Lapse of Nonconforming Sign Permit. A nonconforming sign permit shall lapse and become void under the same circumstances as those under which any other sign permit may lapse and become void.

C. Sign Removal Required. A sign that was constructed, painted, installed, or maintained in conformance with a permit under this Section, but for which the permit has lapsed or not been renewed or for which the time allowed for the continuance of a nonconforming sign has expired, shall be forthwith removed without notice or action from the City.

D. Fees. Applications for permits for existing signs submitted before the expiration of the 24-month period set forth in subsection A shall be exempt from the initial fees adopted under authority of this Chapter, but not from any subsequent fees. (Ord. 2456 § 2, 2010)

17.330.065 Violations

A. General Provisions. Any of the following shall be a violation of this Title and shall be subject to the enforcement remedies and penalties provided by this Chapter, by the City's Municipal Code, and by state law:

1. To install, create, erect, or maintain any sign in a way that is inconsistent with any plan or permit governing such sign or the lot on which the sign is located;
2. To install, create, erect, or maintain any sign requiring a permit without such a permit;
3. To fail to remove any sign that is installed, created, erected, or maintained in violation of this Chapter, or for which the sign permit has lapsed; or
4. To continue any such violation. Each such day of a continued violation shall be considered a separate violation when applying the penalty portion of this Chapter.

(Ord. 2456 § 2, 2010)

17.330.070 Permits and Fees

A. Required Fees. Each application for a sign permit under this Chapter shall be accompanied by applicable fees, which shall be established from time to time by resolution of the Council.

B. Exemptions. Notwithstanding the foregoing, nonprofit organizations located within the City that qualify as a tax exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (26 USCA Section 501(c)(3)), shall be specifically exempted from having to pay temporary banner-permit fees. The preceding exemption applies to banners alone, and the organizations shall still be required to obtain a temporary sign permit before a banner may be displayed. (Ord. 2456 § 2, 2010)

17.330.075 Enforcement and Remedies

A. Any violation or attempted violation of this Chapter or of any condition or requirement adopted pursuant herein may be restrained, corrected, or abated, as the case may be, by injunction or other appropriate proceedings pursuant to state law. A violation of this Chapter shall be considered an infraction. The remedies of the City shall include the following:

1. Issuing a stop-work order for any and all work on any sign on the same lot;
2. Seeking an injunction or other order of restraint or abatement that requires the removal of the sign(s) or the correction of the nonconformity;
3. Imposing any penalties that can be imposed directly by the City under this Title;
4. Seeking in court the imposition of any penalties that can be imposed by such court under this Title;
5. In the case of a sign that poses an immediate danger to the public health or safety, taking such measures as are available to the City under the applicable provisions of this Title and the [Uniform Building Code](#) for such circumstances;
6. In the case of an abandoned sign, as described in Section [17.330.040](#) of this Chapter, upon determining that a sign is abandoned, the City shall provide the property owner with written notice that said sign has been determined to be abandoned and furthermore, the property owner shall have 30 days to remove the sign. The property owner may appeal the determination of abandonment to the Director within 10 days of the date of the notice and may thereafter appeal the Director's determination, within 10 days of the date of such decision, to the City Manager. After the 30-day period, if no appeal has been filed and the sign has not been removed, said sign shall be in violation of this Chapter.

B. The City shall have such other remedies as are and as may from time to time be provided for or allowed by state law for the violation of this Title.

C. All such remedies provided herein shall be cumulative. To the extent that state law may limit the availability of a particular remedy set forth herein for a certain violation or a part thereof, such remedy shall remain available for other violations or other parts of the same violation. (Ord. 2456 § 2, 2010)

17.330.080 Standards by Sign Type and Zoning District

Only the signs and sign standards outlined in this Section shall be allowed unless otherwise expressly provided in Section [17.330.085](#), *Standards for Specific Sign Types*.

A. Sign Allowance. Signs shall be allowed on private property within the City in accordance with the provisions outlined in Table 3-8. Under no circumstances shall a sign be allowed unless it also conforms to the adopted design standards, and with the applicable requirements of Section [17.330.045](#). See Figure 3-8 for illustrations of sample sign types.

All signs denoted as P (permitted) in Table 3-8 shall only be allowed if:

1. The sign areas for all freestanding and building signs on the lot conforms with the maximum permitted sign area as determined by the formula for the zoning district in which the lot is located, as specified in Table 3-9; and
2. The size, location, and number of signs on the lot conform with the requirements of Tables 3-10 and 3-11, which establish permitted sign dimensions by sign type; and
3. The characteristics of the sign conform with the limitations outlined in Table 3-12.

The land use designations referenced in Tables 3-8, 3-9, 3-10 and 3-12 shall be as follows:

- R1 – Residential, Single-Family
- RM – Residential, Multiple (R2 to R5)
- IN – Institutional, Semi-Institutional
- C – Commercial
- LS – Little Saigon District
- CC – Civic Center District
- I – Industrial Uses
- PF – Public Facilities
- V – Vacant Land

B. Permitted Sign Types and Required Standards. Tables 3-8 and 3-9 outline the permitted sign types and standards by zoning district.

Table 3-8
Permitted Signs by Type and Zoning District

<i>Sign Type</i>	<i>R1</i>	<i>RM</i>	<i>IN¹</i>	<i>PF</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>LS</i>	<i>CC</i>	<i>V</i>
Freestanding									
Monument	NP	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	NP
Pylon or pole sign ¹¹	NP	NP	P	P	P	P	P	P	NP
Incidental ²	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Billboard ³	NP	NP	NP	NP	P	P	NP	NP	P
Building									
Arcade	NP	NP	P	P	P	P	P	P	NP
Building marker ⁴	NP	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	NP
Can sign	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP
Canopy	NP	NP	NP	NP	P	P	P	P	NP
Identification ⁵	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	NP
Incidental ²	NP	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	NP
Marquee	NP	NP	NP	P	P	P	P	P	NP
Projecting ⁶	NP	NP	NP	P	P	P	P	P	NP

Roof, integral	NP	NP	P	P	P	P	P	P	NP
Suspended	NP	N	P	P	P	P	P	P	NP
Wall	NP	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	NP
Window	NP	NP	NP	NP	P	NP	P	P	NP
Miscellaneous									
Banner ^{7, 8}	NP	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	NP
Flag ^{7, 8, 9}	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	NP
Pennant ^{7, 8}	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	NP
Temporary ⁷	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Special advertising privilege ⁷	NP	NP	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Inflatable device ¹⁰	NP	NP	NP	NP	P	NP	NP	P	NP
Sign Characteristics									
Animated	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP
Changeable copy	NP	NP	P	P	P	P	P	P	NP
Illumination, internal	NP	NP	P	P	P	P	P	P	NP
Illumination, external	NP	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	NP
Illumination, exposed bulb or neon	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	N	NP	NP	NP
Inflatable	NP	NP	NP	NP	P	NP	NP	P	NP

P = Permitted; NP = Not Permitted; NA = Not Applicable

- ¹ This class of uses applies to institutional and quasi-institutional uses allowed under this Title within any zoning district, subject to a Conditional Use Permit. Such uses may include but are not limited to day care facilities, convalescent hospitals, senior housing, and similar uses.
- ² No commercial message allowed on the sign if such message is legible from any location off the lot on which the sign is located (see Article 7 for definition of "commercial message"). In residential zones, only the address and name of the occupant is permitted. For a real estate sign, only the name, address, and phone number of the broker are permitted, as well as the words "for sale," "for lease," or "for rent."
- ³ Any billboard or permissible structural or electrical modification thereof permitted by this Chapter shall be subject to the regulations of this Chapter and Section 17.330.050.C, including the requirement for a Conditional Use Permit, which shall establish parameters reasonably necessary to ensure compatibility with surrounding land uses including, but not limited to, maximum sign area, height, setbacks, and sign face dimensions.
- ⁴ May include only building name, date of construction, or historical data on historic site; must be cut or etched into masonry, bronze, or similar material.
- ⁵ Only address and name of occupant allowed on sign.
- ⁶ If such sign is suspended or projects above the public right-of-way, the issuance and continuation of a sign permit shall be conditioned on the sign owner obtaining and maintaining in force liability insurance for such a sign in such form and amount as the Director may reasonably from time to time determine, provided that the amount of such liability insurance shall be at least \$500,000 per occurrence per sign.
- ⁷ The provisions of Sections 17.330.025, 17.330.050 and 17.330.055 shall apply.
- ⁸ For apartment complexes of 16 units or more, the provisions of Section 17.330.050 shall apply.
- ⁹ Flags of the United States, the state, the City, foreign nations having diplomatic relations with the United States, and any other flag adopted or sanctioned by an elected legislative body of competent jurisdiction, provided that in commercial and industrial zones such a flag not exceed 216 square feet (12 feet by 18 feet) in area and not be flown from a pole more than 60 feet in height. In

residential zones, a flag shall not exceed 108 square feet (9 feet by 12 feet) and shall not be flown from a pole more than 35 feet in height. These flags must be flown in accordance with protocol established by the Congress of the United States for the Stars and Stripes. Any flag not meeting any one or more of these conditions shall be considered a banner sign and shall be subject to regulation as such.

- 10 Inflatable devices are permitted for all automobile dealerships pursuant to Section 17.330.050. For all other commercial uses, inflatable devices are permitted only under the terms of Section 17.330.055.

- 11 The design of a pole sign is subject to Section 17.330.085(B)(4)(e).



Figure 3-8
Sample Sign Types

Table 3-9
Maximum Sign Area by Zoning District

<i>Sign Type</i>	<i>RI</i>	<i>RM</i>	<i>IN¹</i>	<i>PF</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>LS</i>	<i>CC</i>	<i>V</i>
The maximum total amount of sign area permitted on each lot or principal use for freestanding and building signs (except incidental, building marker, identification and banner signs, and flags) shall not exceed the lesser of the following:									
Freestanding²	Applicable to each lot regardless of number of principal uses								
Maximum square footage	4	50	100	100	500 ³	100	500 ³	600 ³	NA
Square feet of signage per linear foot of street frontage	NA	NA	NA	NA	1	1	1	1	NA
Building	Applicable to each principal use on a lot								
Maximum square footage ⁴	4	50	100	100	200	200	200	200	NA
Percentage of building frontal area devoted to principal use to be used for signage ⁴	NA	NA	15%	15%	15%	15%	15%	15%	NA

NA = Not Applicable

¹ This class of uses applies to institutional and quasi-institutional uses allowed under this Title within any zoning district, subject to a Conditional Use Permit. Such uses may include but are not limited to day-care facilities, convalescent hospitals, senior housing, and similar uses.

- ² Any billboard or permissible structural or electrical modification thereof permitted by this Chapter shall be subject to the regulations of this Chapter and Section 17.300.050.C, including the requirement for a Conditional Use Permit, which shall establish parameters reasonably necessary to ensure compatibility with surrounding land use including but not limited to maximum sign area, height, setbacks, and sign face dimensions.
- ³ Refer to Table 3-10 for provisions regarding specific freestanding sign allowances for these principal uses.
- ⁴ Minimum sign area for commercial store-front signs shall be less than 40 square feet. All building-mounted signs shall be included in the total area, except for permitted temporary signs, banners, flags and incidental signs.

(Ord. 2456 § 2, 2010)

17.330.085 Standards for Specific Sign Types

A. Required Standards. Tables 3-10 to 3-12 outline the required standards by specific sign types and characteristics.

Table 3-10
Number, Dimensions, and Location of Freestanding Signs by Zoning District

<i>Sign Type</i>	<i>R1¹</i>	<i>RM</i>	<i>IN²</i>	<i>PF</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>LS</i>	<i>CC</i>	<i>V</i>
Monument									
Area (square feet/face)	NA	50	100	100	100	100	100	100	NA
Height (feet)	NA	6	6	6	6	6	6	8 ³	NA
Setback (feet) ⁴	NA	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	NA
Number permitted per lot	NA	1	1 ⁵	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Number permitted per feet of street frontage	NA	NA	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	1 per 300 ⁶	1 per 300 ⁶	1 per 300 ⁶	1 per 500 ³	NA
Pylon or pole sign^{7,8}									
Area (square feet/face)	NA	NA	100	100	100	100	100	200	NA
Height (feet)	NA	NA	25	25	25	25	25	25 ³	NA
Setback (feet) ^{3,4}	NA	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	NA
Number permitted per lot	NA	NA	1 ⁵	1 ⁵	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Number permitted per feet of street frontage	NA	NA	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	1 per 300 ⁶	1 per 300 ⁶	1 per 300 ⁶	1 per 2000 ³	NA

NA = Not Applicable

¹ Refer to Tables 3-8 and 3-9 for permitted free-standing sign allowances in the R1 zoning district.

² This class of uses applies to institutional and quasi-institutional uses allowed under this Title within any zoning district, subject to a Conditional Use Permit. Such uses may include but are not limited to day-care facilities, convalescent hospitals, senior housing, and similar uses.

³ In the Civic Center Overlay, one pylon sign is permitted if the lot has at least 2,001 lineal feet of street frontage. The number of

monument signs and their height are determined as follows:

Lineal Street Frontage	No. of Signs Permitted	Maximum height
0-100	none	NA
101-500	1	6
501-1,000	2	6
1,001-1,500	3	6
1,501-2,000	4	6
2,000 or more	4 monument 1 pylon	6 25

- 4 Setbacks for monument and pylon signs may be reduced to 3 feet if the City Engineer determines that such signs will not obstruct street visibility. No part of a pylon sign shall project into the public right-of-way.
- 5 On lots in residential zones that are developed with institutional/quasi-institutional uses or public-facility uses, one freestanding sign is permitted regardless of lineal street frontage, except that compliance with the provisions outlined in Table 3-9 is required for these uses. For these uses in a commercial or industrial zone, or within the Civic Center or Little Saigon Overlays, freestanding signs are permitted only in conformance with notes 3 and 6.
- 6 In commercial and industrial zones, and in the Little Saigon Overlay, the following limitations apply to monument and pylon signs:

Lineal Street Frontage	No. of Signs Permitted
0-100	none
101-300	1
301-750	2
751-1,500	3
1,501-2,000	4
Over 2,000	5

- 7 Any billboard or permissible structural or electrical modification thereof permitted by this Chapter shall be subject to the regulations of this Chapter and Section 17.330.050.C, including the requirement for a Conditional Use Permit, which shall establish parameters reasonably necessary to ensure compatibility with surrounding land use including, but not limited to, maximum sign area, height, setbacks, and sign face dimensions.
- 8 The design of a pole sign is subject to Section 17.330.085(B)(4)(e).

Table 3-11
Number and Dimensions for Specific Sign Types¹

<i>Sign Type</i>	<i>Number Allowed</i>	<i>Maximum Area</i>	<i>Minimum Vertical Clearance</i>
Freestanding			
Monument	See Table 3-10	See Table 3-10	NA
Pylon or pole sign	See Table 3-10	See Table 3-10	8 feet
Billboard ²	1 per lot	Per CUP	Per CUP
Identification ³	1 per building	50 square feet	8 feet
Incidental	Per master sign plan	Per master sign plan	Per master sign plan
Building			
Arcade	1 per main entrance	Per master sign plan Table 3-9	9 feet
Building marker	1 per building	4 square feet	NA

Canopy	1 per principle use or building	25% of vertical surface of canopy/Table 3-9	9 feet
Identification ³	1 per building	50 square feet	NA

Table 3-11**Number and Dimensions for Specific Sign Types¹**

<i>Sign Type</i>	<i>Number Allowed</i>	<i>Maximum Area</i>	<i>Minimum Vertical Clearance</i>
Incidental	Per master sign plan	Per master sign plan	Per master sign plan
Marquee	1 per principle use or building	See Table 3-9	9 feet
Projecting ⁴	1 per principle use or building	See Table 3-9	9 feet
Roof, integral	1 per principle use or building	See Table 3-9	NA
Suspended	1 per principle use or building	See Table 3-9	9 feet
Wall ⁵	1 per principle use or building	See Table B	NA
Window ^{6, 7, 8}	1 per window	25% of window/Table 3-9	NA
Miscellaneous			
Banner ^{6, 9, 10}	2 per principle use	40 square feet/sign	9 feet
Flag ^{9, 11, 12, 13}	Per master sign plan	216 square feet	9 feet
Pennant ^{6, 9}	Per special event or temporary sign permit	NA	9 feet
Temporary ⁴	Per special event or temporary sign permit	NA	4 feet
Special advertising device ¹⁴	Per Section 17.330.055	Per Section 17.330.055	Per Section 17.330.055
Inflatable device ¹⁵	Per Section 17.330.050 or 17.330.055	Per Section 15.40.110 or 17.330.055	30 feet

NA = Not Applicable; CUP = Conditional Use Permit

¹ No signs shall exceed any applicable maximum numbers or dimensions, or encroach on any applicable minimum clearance shown in this table.

² Any billboard or permissible structural or electrical modification thereof permitted by this Chapter shall be subject to the regulations of this Chapter and Section 17.330.050.C, including the requirement for a Conditional Use Permit, which shall establish parameters reasonably necessary to ensure compatibility with surrounding land use including, but not limited to, maximum sign area, height, setbacks, and sign face dimensions.

³ Identification signs shall not be allowed in addition to any other permitted freestanding or building sign, nor shall they exceed any other limitations imposed on pylon signs.

- 4 Projecting signs may project up to 2 feet into the public right-of-way only in the Civic Center Overlay, pursuant to footnote 5 of Table 3-8 and provided that the building is set back from the front property line no more than 5 feet.
- 5 One additional wall sign may be permitted for a principal use or building that faces two streets, provided that such second wall sign does not exceed 50 percent of the area of the first wall sign and is attached so as to face the second street frontage.
- 6 Temporary signs, including temporary window signs, pennants, and all other types of temporary signs, except for balloon and other inflatable or aerial signs, shall be subject to the provisions of Section 17.330.025.
- 7 A maximum of 10 percent of the 25 percent total allowable window sign area may be used for neon-type signs, except that neon tubing used solely to outline a window, or any portion of a window, no more than 12 inches from the edge of any window pane, shall be exempt from the calculation of the maximum sign-area requirements.
- 8 For purposes of computation of the allowable sign area, a window shall consist of the total glass area constituting a window, along any one wall of a building or structure, regardless of any separation or division in panes of glass and excluding any glass that forms any part of a door.
- 9 For apartment complexes consisting of 16 or more units, the provisions of Section 17.330.050 shall apply.
- 10 For grand openings, as permitted in Section 17.54.050. The maximum area of a banner may exceed 40 square feet; however, in no case shall it exceed an area equal to 15 percent of the face of the building to which it is affixed.
- 11 In all residential zones, a flag shall not exceed 108 square feet (9 feet by 12 feet) in area and the pole shall not exceed 35 feet in height.
- 12 For multitenant buildings, no more than one flag, such as a seasonal flag or corporate flag, per storefront shall be permitted.
- 13 A building permit shall be required for the construction of a flagpole.
- 14 Special advertising devices shall be subject to the provisions of Section 17.330.055.
- 15 Inflatable devices are permitted for all automobile dealerships pursuant to Section 17.330.050. For all other commercial uses, inflatable devices are permitted only under the terms of Section 17.330.055.
- 16 The design of a pole sign is subject to Section 17.330.085(B)(4)(e).

Table 3-12
Permitted Sign Characteristics by Zoning District

<i>Sign Type</i>	<i>RI</i>	<i>RM</i>	<i>IN¹</i>	<i>PF</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>LS</i>	<i>CC</i>	<i>V</i>
Animated	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP
Changeable copy	NP	NP	P	P	P	P	P	P	NP
Illumination, internal ²	NP	NP	P	P	P	P	P	P	NP
Illumination, external ³	NP	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	NP
Illumination, exposed bulb or neon	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP
Inflatable ⁴	NP	NP	NP	NP	P	NP	NP	P	NP

P = Permitted; NP = Not Permitted

¹ This class of uses applies to institutional and quasi-institutional uses allowed under this Title within any zoning district, subject to a Conditional Use Permit. Such uses may include, but are not limited to, day care facilities, convalescent hospitals, senior housing, and similar uses.

² Backlit panels are prohibited. Panels shall be opaque if can-type signs are used and only the lettering shall appear to be illuminated. Backlit individually-cut letter signs are permitted. All electrical raceways shall be concealed, except that the Director may waive the requirement for concealed raceways if it can be found that such concealment is impractical due to the design of the building.

³ Direct and indirect lighting methods are allowed except that they shall not be harsh or unnecessarily bright. Reflectors shall be used to keep light from spilling beyond the limits of the sign face if direct lighting methods are used.

⁴ Inflatable devices are permitted for all automobile dealerships pursuant to Section 17.330.050. For all other commercial uses, inflatable devices are permitted only under the terms of Section 17.330.055.

B. Sign Design Standards.

1. **Overview.** Signs are an important part of any commercial district, as they help customers identify the stores they are looking for. However, the purpose of signs shall not be to advertise. When too many large signs appear along a street, they compete for attention with one another, and their effectiveness as business identifiers is greatly reduced.

The following sign design standards shall be considered in addition to all other applicable requirements of this Title and Chapter 15.36, Uniform Sign Code, of the WMC.

2. **General design requirements.** The following general design requirements shall be consulted prior to developing signs for any project.

- a. *Consider the proportion of letter area.* Letters on signs shall not occupy more than 75 percent of the sign panel area.
- b. *Address identification.* Signs, especially free-standing signs, shall include the address of the business or commercial center, whenever appropriate or desirable.
- c. *Neon lighting.* Neon lighting may be used as an architectural accent.

3. **Building, wall or fascia signs.**

- a. *Can-type signs.* The use of can-type signs with translucent backlit panels are prohibited. Panels shall be opaque if a can-type sign is used and only the lettering shall appear to be illuminated. In cases where the sign area of the sign is no greater than 40 square feet, translucent backlit panels shall also be permitted.
- b. *Exposed raceways.* Exposed raceways behind individual letter signs are prohibited as they emphasize the mechanics of the sign rather than the message. Buildings shall be designed to conceal electrical raceways. For existing buildings, exposed raceways may be permitted with the approval of the Planning Division when concealed electrical raceways are not possible, provided that the raceway is designed to blend with the building/structural wall to which it is attached.
- c. *Remove brackets and repair holes.* When existing signs are removed or replaced, all brackets, poles, and other supports that are no longer required shall be removed. Any holes that remain shall be patched and painted to match the surrounding portion of the building or sign support structure.

4. **Freestanding signs.**

- a. *Sign types.* Freestanding signs, including monument, pole and pylon signs, are permitted pursuant to the following provisions and those outlined in Table 3-8.
- b. *Number, location, area, height, and design.* The number, location, and area of a monument, pole or pylon sign shall be in compliance with the provisions outlined in Tables 3-9 to 3-11.
- c. *Monument signs.* Monument signs shall be placed within a landscaped area that is at least equal to two times the square footage of the sign face.

All tenant sign panels on monument signs shall be no larger than the width of the architectural features of the sign and should be uniform in size and color. Simple, uncomplicated shapes should be used.

- d. *Pylon signs.* Pylon signs shall be designed to be supported by two columns; bare poles are not permitted. The design of a pylon sign, including the supporting columns, shall be compatible and consistent with the design of the commercial development.

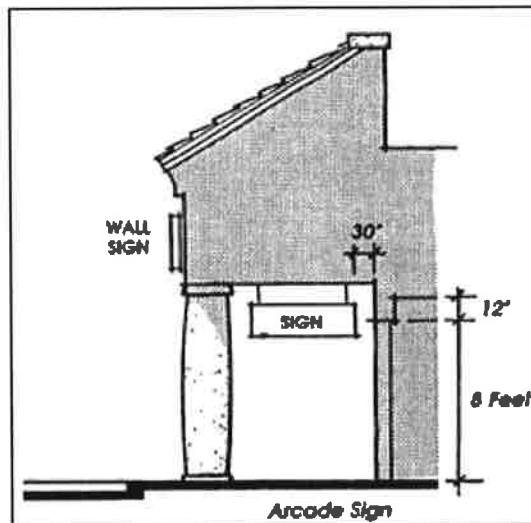
All tenant sign panels on pylon signs shall be limited in size to the width of the twin columns or architectural features of the sign and should be uniform in size and color. Simple,

uncomplicated shapes should be used.

- e. *Pole signs.* Monument signs are preferred; however, single pole signs are permitted provided that the pole is covered with a decorative skirt compatible with the design of the sign and with a width equal to at least half the width of the sign.

5. **Window signs.**

- a. *Number of signs.* If permanent window signs are used, they shall be limited to one per window.
- b. *Sign area.* The area of any permanent window sign shall be in accordance with the provisions outlined in Table 3-11.
- c. *Illuminated signs.* Internally illuminated cabinet or “can” signs and changeable-copy signs should be placed at least three feet behind the window surface.
- d. *Arcade signs.*
 - i. *Size.* Arcade signs shall not exceed 12 inches by 30 inches in size.
 - ii. *Location.* Arcade signs perpendicular and/or parallel to the building face may be installed in multitenant centers underneath arcade roofs. A minimum vertical clearance of 8 feet shall be provided between the walkway and the bottom of the sign.



6. **Banners.**

- a. *Location.* Banners shall be located on the building wall above the business they identify and shall not be located on the roof of a building.
- b. *Sign copy.* Banners shall only advertise and identify the on-site business for which the permit is issued.

(Ord. 2456 § 2, 2010)

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